

Contact

Office of Imported Food Safety,
Inspection and Safety Division,
Department of Food Safety,
Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare
(Extension: 2474, 2497, 2498)

**Inspection Results of Imported Foods Monitoring and Guidance Plan
for FY 2008**

Interim Report

December 2008

**Department of Food Safety
Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare**

Inspection Results of Imported Foods Monitoring and Guidance Plan for FY 2008 (An Interim report)

1. Introduction

In order to monitor and provide instructions to ensure the safety of foods, etc., imported into Japan (hereafter referred to as “imported foods, etc.”), the government established the imported food monitoring and instruction program in 2008 (hereinafter, “the program”). The program is based on the guidelines for monitoring and providing instructions in food sanitation (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Notification No. 301, 2003) as per the regulations of Article 23, Paragraph 1 of the Food Sanitation Law (Law No. 233, 1947; hereinafter, “the Law”); public comments were collected and risk communication was conducted. The program was published in the Official Gazette as an official report according to the regulations of Paragraph 3 of the same article, and the monitoring and instruction for imported foods, etc., is being conducted based upon the Program.

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare will publish an outline of the implementation status of the monitoring and instruction for imported foods, etc., conducted in accordance with the program, by June of the next year and will also publish the mid-year status around the middle of the fiscal year. An interim report on the results of the inspections conducted based on the program from April to September, 2008, which were summarized recently, will be published.

Reference: Website on “Safety of Imported Food”

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/topics/yunyu/tp0130-1.html>

Inquiry: Office of Import Food Safety, Inspection and Safety Division, Department of Food Safety

[ENGLISH](#)

輸入食品の安全を守るために




カローリーベースで納め割を海外から輸入される食品に依存しているわが国において、今や輸入食品をなくして国民の食生活は成り立たないものとなっています。

このため厚生労働省では、国民の「食の安全」を確保するための重要な課題として、輸入食品の安全性確保に取り組んでいます。

※食肉の措置は別に関する「豚肉、鶏ひき肉」は「豚肉、鶏ひき肉」については、「食肉外用途への転用」を必ず守ります。

▶ 輸入手続

▶ 監視指導

▶ 違反事例

▶ 統計情報

▶ 参考資料

① 報道発表資料
一覧を見る

- ▶2008年12月05日 [輸入届出に不適切な試験成績証明書が添付された事案について（第3報）（当該検査機関の改善措置の確認）](#)
- ▶2008年11月27日 [中国における生乳へのメラミン混入事案への対応について（第23報）](#)

▶ トピックス

- ▶ 輸入食品の安全確保を目指して～検査所の仕事（動画：約14分）
- ▶ 検査所パンフレット（PDFファイル）（PDE: 2,097KB）
- ▶ 輸入加工食品の自主管理に関する指針（ガイドライン）

2. Overview of the Imported Foods Monitoring and Guidance Plan for FY 2008

(1) What is the Imported Foods Monitoring and Guidance Plan?

The *Imported Foods Monitoring and Guidance Plan* is a plan for the implementation of monitoring and guidance conducted by the national government with respect to imported foods (Article 23, paragraph 1 of the Law).

[Objective]

To ensure greater safety of imported foods by promoting the national government to conduct inspections at the time of importation and to conduct monitoring of and guidance for importers in an intensive, effective and efficient manner.

(2) Principles for Monitoring and Guidance on Imported Foods

Based on Article 4 of the Food and Safety Basic Law (Law No.48 of 2003) (that is, food safety shall be ensured by taking appropriate measures at each stage of the domestic and overseas food supply process), the Plan is prepared in order that three stages of sanitation measures are taken, namely, in the exporting country, at the time of importation, and at the time of domestic distribution.

(3) Priority Items for Monitoring and Guidance

- Confirmation of whether violations of the Law exist at the time of import declaration
- Monitoring*¹ (Plan for 2008: about 80,000 items across 126 good groups)
- Inspection orders*² (as of September 30, 2008:15 items from all exporting countries and 201 items from 36 countries and 1 region)
- Regulations for comprehensive import bans*³
- Emergency responses based on overseas information, etc.

(4) Promotion of Sanitation Measures in Exporting Countries

- Requests to the governments of exporting countries for the establishment of sanitation control measures.
- Strengthening of control and monitoring systems for agricultural chemicals, etc., and the promotion of pre-export inspections, through on-site inspections and bilateral talks

(5) Guidance for Importers on Voluntary Sanitation Control

- Pre-import guidance (so-called “import consulting”)
- Guidance for voluntary inspections at initial importation and on a regular basis*⁴
- Instructions on the keeping of records
- Dissemination of knowledge on food sanitation to importers, etc.

*1: Systematic inspections based on statistical concepts that take into account the volume of imports and violation rates, etc., for different food types.

*2: With regard to items having a high probability of being in violation of the Law, inspections are ordered by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare at each and every importation. Items are not permitted to be imported or distributed unless they pass that inspection.

*3: Regulations by which the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare can prevent the sale or import of specified foods, without the need for inspections, in cases where it is deemed necessary from the perspective of preventing harm to public health.

*4: Development of pesticide residue testing methods for processed foods that will contribute to verifying raw material management.

3. Inspection results of the imported food monitoring and instruction program in 2008 (interim report)

Table 1 Notification, Inspection and Violation Statuses (April-September 2008: Tentative Report)

No. of Notifications	Amount of import	No. of inspections *1	Percentage *2	No. of violations	Percentage *2
Cases 887,703	1,000 tons 12,046	Cases 91,955	% 10.4	Cases 501	% 0.06
(Records of the previous FY) 914,373	12,226	100,948	11.0	619	0.07

*1 Values obtained after excluding overlapping cases from the total values of monitoring inspection, inspection order, instructive inspection, etc.

*2 Percentage of the number of inspections to the number of notifications

Table 2 Major Violation Cases (April-September 2008: Tentative Report)

Violated article	Number of violations	Component percentage	Major violations
Article 6 (Distribution of prohibited foods and additives)	Cases 98	% 17.4	Aflatoxin-contaminated corn, pearl-barley, peanut, almond, sesame, etc.; cyanide-contaminated cassava; Listeria monocytogenes-contaminated meat products; detection of diarrhetic/paralytic shellfish toxin; and decay, deterioration and fungus formation due to accidents during rice transport
Article 9 (Limitation on distribution, etc. of diseased meat, etc)	5	0.9	No hygiene certificate attached
Article 10 (Limitation on distribution, etc. of additives, etc)	17	3.0	Processed foods that contain additives such as cyclamate, tertiary butylhydroquinone (TBHQ), patent blue V, azorubin, or any other additives not designated for use as additives
Article 11 (Standards and specifications for foods or additives)	431	76.7	Violation of specifications for vegetable and dried vegetable (violation of standards for residual pesticides); violation of specifications for seafood and its processed products (inclusion of antibacterial substances, and violation of standards for residual pesticides); violation of specifications for frozen foods (viable cell count, Escherichia coli and coliform bacilli); violation of standards for usage of additives (sorbic acid, benzoic acid, etc); excessive amount of residual additives(sulfur dioxide, etc.)
Article 18 (Standards and specifications for instruments and containers/packages)	10	1.8	Violation of specifications/standards for instruments and containers/packages; violation of specifications for each raw material
Article 62 (Mutatis mutandis application to toys, etc.)	1	0.2	Violation of specifications for toys or their raw materials
Total	562 (total number) 501 (number of notified violations)		

Table 3 Implementation Status of Monitoring Inspection (April–September 2008: Tentative Report)

Food type	Category of inspection items	Number of programs planned in the FY*	Number of programs implemented	Number of violations
Livestock foods Beef, pork, chicken, horse meat, poultry meat, and other meats	Antibacterial substances	2,200	1,094	1
	Residual agricultural chemicals	1,700	978	0
	Standards for constituents	650	330	0
Processed livestock foods Natural cheeses, processed meat products, ice cream, frozen products (meat products), and other products	Antibacterial substances	1,500	942	5
	Residual agricultural chemicals	550	287	0
	Additives	1,100	913	0
	Standards for constituents	1,800	956	4
Seafood products Bivalves, fish, shellfish (shrimps, prawns, crabs) and other products	Antibacterial substances	3,500	1,577	2
	Residual agricultural chemicals	850	998	0
	Additives	250	170	0
	Standards for constituents	900	553	0
Processed seafood Processed fish products (fillet, dried or minced fish, etc.), processed fish roe products, and other products	Antibacterial substances	3,300	2,152	0
	Residual agricultural chemicals	1,750	1,518	0
	Additives	1,800	1,596	1
	Standards for constituents	3,900	2,819	19
Agricultural foods Vegetables, fruit, wheat, barley, corn, beans, peanuts, nuts, seeds, and other products	Antibacterial substances	750	834	0
	Residual agricultural chemicals	18,350	8,761	48
	Additives	600	337	0
	Standards for constituents	1,250	591	0
	Mycotoxins	2,200	1,295	2
	GMOs	1,250	520	0
Processed agricultural foods Frozen products processed vegetables), processed vegetable products, processed fruit products, spices, instant noodles, and other products	Residual agricultural chemicals	6,500	2,977	4
	Additives	4,200	2,263	1
	Standards for constituents	2,100	1,235	10
	Mycotoxins	2,250	911	0
	GMOs	200	31	0
	Exposure to radiation	300	208	1
Other foods Health foods, soups, flavorings, seasonings, sweets, edible oils, fat, frozen products, and other products	Antibacterial substances	300	24	0
	Residual agricultural chemicals	250	252	0
	Additives	3,100	1,266	3
	Standards for constituents	650	347	1
	Mycotoxins	600	295	0
Drinks and beverages Mineral water, soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and other products	Residual agricultural chemicals	300	99	0
	Additives	900	651	0
	Standards for constituents	900	434	1
	Mycotoxins	300	81	0
Additives, equipment, containers and packages Toys	Standards for constituents	1,800	347	0
Foods subject to reinforced monitoring inspection	Confirmation of removal of SRM, differentiation of fish species using DNA-based techniques, antibacterial substances, genetically modified foods, exposure to radiation, food additives	5,000	2,409	0
Total (number)		79,800	43,051 <u>Rate of programs implemented to planned= ~54%</u>	103

* The approximate number of programs counted by each test item such as antibiotics and pesticides in food products is shown.

Table 4 Items Subject to Reinforcement of Monitoring Inspection*¹ (April–September 2008 *²)

Countries/Regions	Subject foods	Test items
China	Eels	Endosulfan
	Kale, Chinese chives	Chlorpyrifos
	Buckwheat noodle	Aflatoxin
	Large peanuts	Daminozide
	Matsutake mushrooms, sesame seeds	Acetochlor
	Spinach	Clothianidin
	Green peppers	Difenoconazole
	Komatsuna (<i>Brassica rapa</i> var. <i>peruviridis</i>)	Pyrimethanil
	Japanese leeks	Pyrimethanil
	Swiss chard	Atrazine
Royal jelly	Nitrofurans	
Thailand	Saisin (<i>Asarum sieboldii</i>), Kan-Jong	EPN
	Soft-shelled turtles	Enrofloxacin, Furaltadone
	coconut trunk	Paclabutrazol
U.S.	Potatoes	Dazomet Metam Methyl isothiocyanate
	Apple juice	Patulin
Myanmar	Galvanso bean	Cypermethrin
	Coffee beans	DDT
Yemen	Coffee beans	Chlordane, γ -BHC, Heptachlor
Australia	Barley	Amitraz, Fipironil
Philippines	Mangoes	Chlorpyrifos, Cypermethrin
France	Blackcurrant	Bupirimate, Flusilazole
Venezuela	Cacao beans, sesame seeds	Chlorpyrifos
South Korea	Green chili	Flusilazole
Bangladesh	Chili peppers	Triazophos
Laos	Kale	Fipironil
Sudan	Sesame seeds	Diazinon
Gambia	Sesame seeds	γ -BHC
Guatemala	Sesame seeds	Methamidophos
All exporters (excluding Nigeria)	Sesame seeds	Aflatoxin
All exporters (excluding India)	Sickle senna seeds	Aflatoxin
All exporters (excluding U.S. and Italy)	Processed almond products	Aflatoxin

*1 These items are subjected to inspection reinforcement after a violation is detected; this is usually done for 30% of the total number of notifications.

*2 Excludes items included in Table 5.

Table 5 Items Shifted to Inspection Order (April–September, 2008)

Countries/Regions	Subject foods	Test items
China	Chicken	Furaltadone Furazolidone
	Carrots	Acephate
	Milk, dairy products, and processed foods containing those as an ingredient	Melamine
Ethiopia	Coffee beans	γ -BHC DDT Chlordane Heptachlor
Taiwan	Carrots	Acephate Methamidofos
Philippines	Okra	Fluazifop Methamidofos
Brazil	Wheat	Methamidofos
Thailand	Asparagus	EPN
India	Sickle senna seeds	Aflatoxin
Nigeria	Sesame seeds	Aflatoxin
Italy	Processed almond products	Aflatoxin
Vietnam	Seafood products (Limited to those consumed unheated or those not confirmed to have received adequate heat treatment [either equaling or surpassing 70 degrees Celsius for one minute] in Japan before selling)*	<i>Shigella</i>
Canada	Lobster (Limited to edible organs, such as tomalley and digestive organs inside the shell, of lobsters from Atlantic coastal waters)	Paralytic shellfish poison
US	Foods containing soft and semi-soft type natural cheese as a major ingredient (Limited to those consumed unheated)*	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>

*Only those produced by manufacturers that have committed a violation.

Table 6 Items Subject to Inspection Order and Inspection Results (April–September 2008: Tentative Report)

Countries/ Regions	Main subject foods	Main test items	Number of tests	Number of violations
All exporters (16 items)	Peanuts, chili peppers, nuts, pearl barley, figs, etc.	Aflatoxin	4,305	29
	Salted salmon roe	Root nitrite, etc.	216	2
	Cyanide-containing beans, cassava	Cyanide	255	5
China (46 items)	Chicken, shrimps, eels, mackerel, honey, clam, etc.	Nitrofurans, tetracyclines antibiotics, malachite green, enrofloxacin, etc	23,438	26
	Japanese leeks, Shiitake mushrooms, carrots, green peppers, etc.	Acetochlor, fenpropathrin, methamidophos, pyrimethanil, etc.	13,361	14
	Clams	Paralytic shellfish toxin, diarrhetic shellfish toxin	2,435	7
	Processed eel products, etc.	Bacteria count, coliform bacteria	642	0
	All processed products	Cyclamate	543	0
Thailand (25 items)	Cultured shrimps	Oxolinic acid	1,198	0
	Okra, green asparagus, mangoes, bananas, etc.	EPN, chlorpyrifos, cypermethrin, etc	1,387	2
	Basil seeds	Aflatoxin	2	0
Korea (20 items)	Constricted tagelus	Endosulfan	85	10
	Paprikas, red peppers, perilla, etc.	Ethoprophos, chlorpyrifos, tebuconazole, bifenthrin	395	4
	Clams, etc.	Paralytic shellfish toxin, diarrhetic shellfish toxin	472	1
	Ark shells to be eaten raw	Vibrio parahaemolyticus	1	0
Taiwan (16 items)	Eels, royal jelly, etc.	Chloramphenicol, nitrofurans etc.	2,949	0
	Oolong tea, mangoes, carrots, etc.	Bromopropylate, methamidophos, cypermethrin, etc.	416	14
	All processed products	Cyclamate	12	0
US (12 items)	Corn, parsley, etc.	Pirimiphos-methyl, chlorpyrifos, etc.	167	0
	Corn, processed almond products	Aflatoxin	1,349	21
Vietnam (8 items)	Shrimps, cuttlefish, etc.	Chloramphenicol, nitrofurans etc.	14,184	20
	Spinach	Indoxacarb	73	0
	Sesame seeds, etc	Aflatoxin	21	0
	Seafood products	<i>Shigella</i>	6	0
	All processed products	Cyclamic acid	51	0
Others (30 countries, 58 items)			13,837	70*
Total			81,800	225

* Breakdown: Coffee beans produced in Ethiopia (γ -BHC, etc.): 32 cases; Cacao beans produced in Ecuador (2,4-D): 15 cases; Okra produced in the Philippines (fluazifop): 6 cases; Cacao beans produced in Ghana (pirimiphos-methyl): 6 cases

Table 7 Records of Pesticide Residue Testing of Processed Foods (April–September 2008: Tentative Report)

Food category	Processed livestock foods* ¹	Processed seafood* ²	Processed agricultural foods* ³	Other foods* ⁴	Total
Number of tests	291	375	274	233	1,173
Number of violations	0	0	0	0	0

*1 Example: pork cutlet, sausage

*2 Example: deep-fried prawns, broiled eel

*3 Example: bread, french fries

*4 Example: pot stickers, octopus dumplings, beverages

Table 8 Major Cases in Which Monitoring Was Reinforced Based on Information From Overseas (April–September 2008)

Month of reinforcement	Country	Food and contents	Background and monitoring status
April 2008	US	Cereal (possibly contaminated with Salmonella)	Measures were taken to return shipments for each import notification of such products based on information regarding product recall in the US.
April 2008	Italy	Natural cheese (possibly contaminated with Listeria)	Measures were taken to return shipments for each import notification of such products, based on information that Italian-produced cheese was found to be contaminated with <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in Germany. Voluntary inspections measures were taken for cheese produced by the manufacturer in question.
April 2008	Australia	Baby food (possibly containing foreign matters)	Measures were taken to return shipments for each import notification of such products based on information regarding product recall in Australia.
June 2008	US	Melon (possibly contaminated with Salmonella)	Measures were taken to return shipments for each import notification of such a product based on information regarding product recall in the US.
July 2008	New Zealand	Beef (possibly contaminated with endosulfan)	Voluntary inspections measures were taken for each import notification of such a product in response to a report from Korea that beef from New Zealand was found to be tainted with endosulfan.
July 2008	Mexico	Hot peppers (possibly contaminated with Salmonella)	In response to a report that Mexican-grown raw peppers had been linked to a salmonella outbreak in the US, guidelines were issued for each import notification of such products, outlining the use of raw peppers only for heat processed foods.
July 2008	Canada/US	Lobster (possibly contaminated with paralytic shellfish poison)	Voluntary inspections measures were taken for each import notification of lobster from the waters of the Atlantic Ocean from Canada to the US based on a warning issued in the US to avoid eating lobster tomalley because of potential contamination with paralytic shellfish poison.
August 2008	Chile	Pork (possibly contaminated with dioxins)	Based on a report from Korea that Chilean pork was found to be tainted with dioxins, measures were taken to ban imports of pork produced at the related farms, and to monitor pork produced at other farms for dioxins.
September 2008	China	Baby formula (possibly containing melamine)	Orders were put in place to suspend import notifications of milk and dairy products based on a report from China regarding the occurrence of kidney stones in infants as a result of baby formula. Guidelines were issued for importers of processed foods containing milk and dairy products to check the raw materials for melamine and to conduct voluntary inspections upon import.

(Reference) A description of Key Terms in the Interim Report

Term	Description
Sodium nitrite	Additive (color-fixing agent) whose maximum residual amounts as root nitrite are defined
Acetochlor	Pesticide (anilide herbicide)
Acephate	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Azorubin	Undesignated additive (coloring agent)
Atrazine	Pesticide (triazine herbicide)
Aflatoxin	Fungal toxin (produced by the fungus <i>Aspergillus</i> , etc.)
Amitraz	Pesticide (amizine insecticide)
Benzoic acid	Additive (preservative)
Gene modification	A technique in which a part of a gene of a bacterium, etc., is segmented, and the constituent elements are recombined and returned to the gene of the original organism or recombined with a gene of another organism
Indoxacarb	Pesticide (oxadiazon insecticide)
Ethoprophos	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Endosulfan	Pesticide (organochlorine insecticide)
Enrofloxacin	Animal drug (synthetic antimicrobial (new quinolone))
Oxolinic acid	Animal drug (synthetic antimicrobial (quinolone))
Clothianidin	Pesticide (neonicotinoide insecticide)
Chloramphenicol	Animal drug (antibiotic (chloramphenicol))
Chlordane	Pesticide (organochlorine insecticide)
Chlorpyrifos	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Diarrhetic shellfish toxin	Shellfish toxin (mainly refers to toxins produced by a harmful plankton accumulated in clams; toxic clams cause diarrhetic poisoning)
Cyclamate	Undesignated additive (sweetener)
Cyanide	Cyanide-related compounds (e.g., cyanogenic glycoside) found in vegetables such as some varieties of beans
Dinotefuran	Pesticide (neonicotinoide insecticide)
Difenoconazole	Pesticide (nitrogen-containing bactericide)
Cypermethrin	Pesticide (pyrethroid insecticide)
<i>Shigella</i>	Pathogenic microorganism (A bacterium that normally lives in the intestines of humans and animals and causes gastroenteritis.)
Sorbic acid	Additive (preservative)
Diazinon	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Dioxins	Generic name for a group of three organic compounds containing chlorine: polychlorodibenzo-p-dioxin (PCDD), polychlorodibenzofuran (PCDF), and coplanar PCB (CoPCB)
Dazomet, Metam and Methyl isothiocyanate	Pesticide (soil disinfectant)
Daminozide	Pesticide (plant growth regulator)

Term	Description
<i>V. parahaemolyticus</i>	Pathogenic microorganism (normal flora in seawater, a <i>Vibrio</i> species that mainly contaminates fishes and shellfishes and causes acute gastroenteritis)
Tetracycline antibiotic	Antibiotic (mainly refers to oxytetracycline, chlortetracycline, tetracycline)
Tebufenozide	Pesticide (benzoyl hydrazide insecticide)
Triazophos	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Sulfur dioxide	Additive (antioxidant)
Nitrofurans	Generic name for nitrofurantoin synthetic antibacterial agent, an animal drug
Paclobutrazol	Pesticide (plant growth regulator)
Patulin	Fungal toxin (toxin produced by the fungi <i>Penicillium</i> , <i>Aspergillus</i> , etc.)
Patent blue V	Undesignated additive (coloring agent)
Pirimiphos-methyl	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Pyrimethanil	Pesticide (anilinopyrimidine fungicide)
Fipronil	Pesticide (phenylpyrazol insecticide)
Fenpropathrin	Pesticide (pyrethroid insecticide)
Bupirimate	Pesticide (pyrimidine fungicide)
Furazolidone	Animal drug (nitrofurantoin synthetic antibacterial agent); generates AOZ when metabolized
Furaltadone	Animal drug (nitrofurantoin synthetic antibacterial agent); generates AMOZ when metabolized
Fluazifop	Pesticide (phenoxy acid herbicide)
Flusilazole	Pesticide (nitrogen containing bactericide)
Bromopropylate	Pesticide (organochlorine insecticide)
Heptachlor	Pesticide (organochlorine insecticide)
Polysorbate	Undesignated additive (emulsifying agent)
Paralytic shellfish poison	Shellfish poison (mainly refers to toxins produced by a harmful plankton accumulated in clams, toxic clams cause paralytic poisoning)
Malachite green	Animal drug (triphenylmethane synthetic antibacterial agent)
Methamidophos	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
Melamine	A chemical substance used as a primary raw material of melamine resin
<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>	Pathogenic microorganism (a normal flora in the natural environment that contaminates milk products and causes listeriosis)
γ -BHC	Pesticide (organochlorine insecticide)
DDT	Pesticide (organochlorine insecticide)
EPN	Pesticide (organophosphorus insecticide)
SRM	Parts of a cow (the head [excluding tongue and cheek meat], the spinal cord, vertebral column, and ileum [up to a 2-m region from its connection with the cecum]) indicating the accumulation of an abnormal prion protein that is a possible causative agent of BSE (bovine spongiform encephalopathy).
TBHQ	Undesignated additive (antioxidant)